

THE L.I.E. (LIFE IN EVALUATION) INVENTORY¹:
a devotional exercise towards greater wholeness

Allow yourself about 20-30 minutes to answer the questions below. Record your answers in a journal.

1. Identify a fairly recent unhealthy behavior and/or emotion.
2. What triggered that behavior or emotion? What was the activating event?
3. Next, reflect specifically on that activating event, the trigger. Be sure to own *your* behavior; do not blame your actions on someone or something else. As best you are able to discern, which of the three areas below fueled your unhealthy behavior or emotion? (Note: you do not have to address all three areas; one will suffice.)
 - a. Is my view of God right? Do I need to refine what I believe about God?
 - b. Do I hold unrealistic expectations?
 - c. Do I have any irrational beliefs?
4. Now, using Scripture, correct any bad theology, unrealistic expectations, or irrational beliefs with God's truth.
5. Finally, if you could redo the situation, what would have been a healthier response to avoid allowing this to happen again.

Here's a sample of one of my journal entries:

1. Unhealthy behavior and/or emotion.
Yelling at my kids for not picking up their room.
2. Trigger?
Feeling overwhelming stress from school work, fundraising/financial pressure.
3. Reflection.
It is probably unrealistic of me to expect that my house will always be clean, quiet, and calm when I have a 7, 5, and 3 year old living with parents who both work from home.
4. Truth of God.
Psalm 55:22 "Cast your cares on the Lord and he will sustain you; he will never let the righteous fall."
I Peter 5:7 "Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you."
5. Healthy Response.
I want to do a better job of daily giving over to the Lord the pressure I put on myself to excel in school and the ever-present financial stress I constantly feel. *Lord, enable me to represent you well to my family. Amen.*

¹ Adapted from Gary C. Barnes. "Truth vs Untruth," unpublished class notes for Pastoral Counseling 101 (Dallas Theological Seminary, 2011).